

THE

Barbinger of Light.

A
MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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CONTENTS.

Unsuccessful Circles	455-6
The Trial of Mr. Logan	456
Circles at Sandhurst	456-7
Co-operation.....	457
Answers to Questions.....	457-8
The Clock struck two	458-60
M. Houdin and Spiritualism	460
The "Evangelist" of Dunedin on Victorian affairs	461
The Operations of Anti-Christ	461-4
Mr. Charles H. Forster, the Medium	464-6
Letters of Travel by J. M. Peebles	466-7
Professor de Morgan	468
"Reclaiming"	469
Mediumship—Illustration from Musical Instruments	469

PRACTICAL investigators into the phenomena of Spiritualism are often much disheartened at the decadence and frequent breaking up of circles to which they have attached themselves, and in which they had some times received very satisfactory evidence of spirit power. To them it seems inexplicable that the power once manifested should be withdrawn. Our attention has been frequently drawn to this subject, and we think our experience of the causes which lead to the result referred to may be of service to some of our readers. It is a well known fact to those who have studied the subject, that spirits can only communicate through certain magnetic or electric conditions, and unless these conditions exist, the spirit is powerless to manifest itself to its friends in the body. In rare cases, the necessary conditions exist in the emanations of one person, and in these instances the influence is rarely withdrawn except from the ill health of the medium; but as a rule it requires the blended emanations of several persons to make up the necessary aura for the spirits to manifest through. Now the odic emanation, or aura, of various individuals will not blend except they are, at least for the time being, on a similar plane of thought and idea; hence no benefit is derived by sitting in circle unless all are united in one common purpose; indeed from the proximity of antagonistic spheres there is less probability of success than there would be if the individuals composing the circle sat alone. The great desideratum is, in forming a circle for investigation, for the individuals composing it to ascertain and determine to abide by the conditions proved by the experience of prior investigators to be essential to success. Unfortunately very few do this, and hence the results are so often unsatisfactory. The folly of such an omission in any other scientific investigation would be apparent to the merest tyro. What would be thought of a party endeavouring to ex-

amine and demonstrate the nature of the solar spectrum in the open air, or to carry through the photographic process in a light room? Yet in this most important matter which is not yet reduced to a science, the known conditions are in the vast majority of cases absolutely ignored. In very many instances circles are formed with no higher motive than curiosity, aroused probably by accounts of phenomena occurring elsewhere. Such circles as these rarely succeed, not having the necessary stamina. Unless some intelligent manifestations sufficiently striking to arrest the attention and raise the tone of the circle occur, they rapidly collapse. In other instances a circle has some little mediumistic power in it, which struggles to manifest itself, but from want of constant support from the party the manifestations are so erratic that the circle tire and give up in despair. In the lower class of physical manifestations, such as the movement of tables and other ponderable bodies, the conditions are not so strict, the coarser or more electrical emanations being used by the spirits to act upon the objects to be moved, and harmony of mind being less essential; but this kind of manifestation soon becomes wearisome to the intelligent mind. Usually in these cases the circle becomes divided, some desiring more intellectual evidences, others more sensational ones of a physical kind. Between these opposing influences the manifestations become unsatisfactory and the circle breaks up. There are many other causes leading to similar results, but they all centre in the primary one viz., non-observance of known conditions. No person should join an investigating circle unless they consider the matter of sufficient importance for them to devote three or four hours a week for at least three months to it. The members of the circle should come as truth-seekers having one common object in view, seeking first to ascertain the reality and objectivity of the phenomena; secondly, the cause; and thirdly, the laws governing the manifestations. It sometimes happens that a circle on this basis makes but slow progress, by reason of their having little mediumistic power among the members, but perseverance will eventually overcome this difficulty, whilst with others who are more fortunate in this respect the progress will be more rapid. Wherever there is dissension in a circle all possibility of progress ceases,

however small the numbers may be, it is better for them under these circumstances to separate. Two or three earnest and harmonious minds are better than a dozen inharmonious ones; better by far to have a few progressive circles than many stationary or retrogressive ones. We would advise all intending investigators not to enter too hastily into the investigation, but to acquaint themselves either by reading or advice from competent sources with the known laws of mediumship and spirit communion.

THE Otago "Times" of June 7th contains a report of the trial by the Presbytery of Dunedin of Mr. John Logan, an old and respected resident of that city, for heresy, the charge being that he "did entertain views contrary to the belief of the Church and Christianity generally." He was further charged with giving Messrs. Peebles and Dunn both public and private countenance during their recent visit to Dunedin. The case had been primarily considered by the "Knox Church," of which Mr. Logan was a Deacon, and referred by them to the Presbytery. After the case had been stated by the Rev. Mr. Gillies, the Rev. Dr. Stuart delivered a very temperate address, from which it appears that he was favorable to the investigation of Spiritualism so long as the doctrines of the Church were not interfered with. But speaking of Messrs. Peebles and Dunn he says he thought "that the doctrines taught and upheld by these men were very damaging to the Christian faith." We presume the Rev. Doctor refers to orthodox Christian faith, in which case we thoroughly coincide with him. The teaching of our friend "Peebles" was as damaging to that Christian faith of to-day as would be the teachings of Christ were they re-iterated. It appears that Dr. Stuart had attended one of Mr. Peeble's lectures without feeling any the worse for it. The mild dose administered by our gentle brother in his kind and genial way had been taken without a qualm, and induced the worthy Doctor to attend a lecture of Dr. Dunn's. "Brother" Dunn's dose, however, was too strong for him, and made him feel very bad. Mr. Logan appears to have been labouring under some misapprehension as to the nature of the charge to be brought against him, thinking it was limited to his having appeared on the stage at the Queen's Theatre during Mr. Peeble's lecture: this it seems was the basis of the charge. From the tenor of Mr. Logan's defence it appears that he considers himself justified in interpreting the doctrines of the Church liberally, and not adhering strictly to the letter. He points out that many Presbyterian Ministers diluted their Presbyterianism (we presume with something more spiritual). He also remarks that there are many men doing much good for mankind who at times spoke what was not sound doctrine. He maintained his right to appear where he liked, and to give what opinion he liked of any lecture he might hear. It was hardly to be expected that the Presbytery would allow such liberty of thought and action. It did not require much perspicuity to see what would be the result of such toleration. So without further delay Mr. Logan was brought to the point with a series of doctrinal questions, his answers to which, although given with great care, were sufficient to satisfy the Presbytery of his doctrinal unsoundness, and they accordingly carried the resolution of the Rev. Mr. Gillies deposing him from his office of Deacon and suspending him from all church privileges until he repents to the satisfaction of the session. Mr. Logan, however, does not appear to be in a repentant mood, but has given notice of appeal to the Synod, which meets in January next. We do not suppose that the Synod will reverse the decision of the Presbytery, but the discussion of the matter will doubtless have a beneficial effect not only on the public, but upon the more liberal minds in the Presbyterian Church.

CIRCLES AT SANDHURST.

THE number of spiritual circles in the Sandhurst district continues to increase. We hear encouraging accounts from different quarters. One circle, consisting of nine members, sends us some specimens of its first written communications, which are very good to begin with, and will no doubt lead to better ones in the future as the members composing the circle are in earnest. We understand that some interesting lectures have been given to the same circle by a speaking medium, but they had no facilities to record them.

Dear friends,—I am happy to see so many of you present to-night; very happy, because most of you are earnest seekers for the truth of the cause for which you have met here to-night. Persevere as you have done before, and you will be shown that, which will not leave the shadow of a doubt in your minds as to the reality of spirits visiting you on this earth. O! friends, may the regeneration which awaits you shed its choicest and best gifts upon you. Let faith be your watchword, and like a beacon of light it will shed its resplendent rays on your path, and eventually lead you to eternal happiness.

H. R.

Dear brother,—I promised to write a communication through you. I know how anxious you are for me to control you to write, but you are too impatient. We told you that you would be informed when you would get written communications in your home. We will keep our promise, but you must be patient. We know that your circle is desirous of progressing, but we know what manifestations are best for you, and when to give them. Dear friends, I hope the communication which I am about to write through the medium will be of some benefit to your circle.

"Alas! how easily you are led away by false doctrines, but how difficult it is for us to convince you of things which are really true. These manifestations we give you in all truth, and yet you are not convinced. No you will sooner believe those men who preach what is untrue, lies, delusion. They preach to you of hell, the devil, of eternal fire, and all the horrors their imaginations can conjure up to inspire their victims with terror. I do not accuse all of these men of this terrible sin, but there are unfortunately but too many of this class among them. To make you believe their lies they will deny with the sun before you it is day, and if you doubt they undertake to convince you that such is the truth. How easily their huge assertions may be held in check by quite a trifling objection. Ask them to prove all they preach to be true? It is only natural you should believe the same doctrines which we believed when on earth, and which we upheld as the truth; but now we are enabled to deny that which we believed when on earth to be truth, as a delusion. O! dear friends, if you would be as happy as I am in the spirit-land lead good and just lives, for according to your earthly lives so will your reward be in the spirit-land. What a fearful responsibility rests on these men; with the soul of man—its hopes, its fears, its destiny their theme, do they ever think of this? Yes, often whilst preaching to you things which they themselves do not believe; but when they have been all their lives labouring indifferently in the cause of truth and falsehood, when they have been habitual and hired concealers of the truth, it is difficult, it is impossible, that they should have any fixity in their principles. But the time will come when all will be changed. Each season has its work; every age advances a step. Is it possible after all we have shown you, you will not believe us? Ask your own conscience if it is possible that the Great Spirit would create such a being as the devil, and give him the power of bringing infallible ruin upon millions, and that to insure the success of his infernal speculation he lays his snare for those the most easily deceived and corrupted, that he surrounds the poor with allurements, that he drives the innocent to the most culpable deeds, that he has recourse for the purpose of inveigling his prey, to lies and impostures, that he has organized a system of secrecy and darkness so that these dupes should plunge into the gulf before reason could enlighten or the warning of their friends preserve them from the temptation, and that to respond to his perfidious invitations renewed incessantly they come from want to

crime, suicide, murder, and everything horrible, and he the instigator and receiver continually stretches out his hand to grasp those souls which he is the cause of being eternally ruined. No, my friends, God is a God of Love. He would not create such a monster. There are hells and devils enough, but they are all of your own creating.—Good night."

H. R.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

CO-OPERATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR,—In my first letter to your valuable paper on co-operation some time since I merely drew attention to the subject, thinking that the spiritists would take it up with great vigour and express their thoughts freely on such a vital question, so as to elicit the best method of carrying it out. I was much pleased to read your last leading article, and hope it will be the means of awakening interest on the subject.

I believe that the Agricultural Association alluded to by you will do a great deal of good if it can be carried out; but I am very doubtful, for not many of us have attained to those sublime heights of love and perfection where universal benevolence and distributive justice reign supreme.

Then, again, the shares, £25, are out of all reason, and it will exclude those classes it ought to take in, viz., the unemployed. I think that it would be much wiser to commence a Manufactural Association, because it would be far more profitable, and the farming interest in this colony is already overdone. There are plenty of fine openings in this colony for cloth or earthenware factories. I know a place within thirty miles of Melbourne where any amount of the finest kaolin, white almost as snow, is waiting for the skilled hands of the workman to turn it into golden treasure. This would be also a great boon for our children who are growing up around us with very little prospect of anything to do except hawking the daily papers or joining the shoe-blacks in Paddy's Market. Let us educate and provide plenty of employment for the rising generation, and reduce the number of drinking shops, and then the dens of vice and our gaols would soon be emptied of their inmates. All these institutions are a living disgrace to civilization, and the bitter fruits of social disunity which can be remedied.

I think the most practical way to commence an association of this kind would be for all the spiritists in the colony to subscribe one shilling per week each until sufficient funds are raised to build part of a large cloth factory, and furnish the same with all necessary machinery, so as to commence work as soon as possible. 3000 shillings per week would raise the grand sum of 7800 pounds per annum, and one year's contributions would enable us to commence building operations, and the machinery might be ordered at the same time, so as to be ready when the building was finished.

The unemployed mechanics and labourers of the Association must be the first employed to build the factory, and to be paid for doing a certain amount of work in eight hours similar to a private company, which would prevent disputes arising of any note, and prepare the way for more advanced associations of every description. Piece-work, if judiciously arranged, is the most independent and the best way to carry out any kind of work.

After the Association has reached the years of maturity I think all the members at the age of fifty ought to be pensioned off for life, so that they may feel thoroughly free from all restraint for the rest of their days. Man naturally is a lover of liberty, therefore let us take nature for our guide in all things; then she will smile upon our efforts and crown them with success.

If fifty will join me I am willing to subscribe my shilling per week at once, or to advance the yearly subscription, £2 12s. I feel convinced that nothing can remove the existing evils in the world except co-opera-

tion, and my beloved spiritists, it is in our power to accomplish all I have stated in this short letter. Social disunity, sectarianism, and human imperfection, are the real causes of all our misery, and not total human depravity as taught by the clergy.

If we wish to have our names written on the living memories of men and engraven on the imperishable jasper walls of the spirit spheres, let us never rest until co-operation is universal, and that accumulated wealth of ages produced by the incessant labour of the working classes is restored again to its legitimate owners.

A WORKING MAN.

MORE LIGHT WANTED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

DEAR SIR,—We are two earnest inquirers who meet occasionally and have a sitting, but we are much disengaged at the results as yet. It is only by the table we get communication, but the messages are often false and contradictory. We desire, therefore, light on such messages and contradictions, and on other subjects such as "mediumship," the formation and conduct of circles, &c. By acceding to our request you will confer a favor on

Yours respectfully,

ROBERT WISHART.

JAMES ANDERSON.

Brisbane, June 4th, 1873.

[We refer our correspondents to our leading article, and would recommend them to procure "Mediumship, its laws, and conditions," "The Philosophy of Spirit Intercourse," "Rules for the formation of Circles," and a Planchette.—En. H. Lt.]

Answers to Questions

The growing desire for information on all subjects connected with Spiritualism and Free Religious thought, has induced us to reserve a portion of our space for the publication of answers to questions, practical and spiritual. We therefore invite the public to send us questions on any subject of general import, the most important of which will be submitted to the controlling spirit of an advanced local circle, and published with the answer as space admits, those questions of minor importance which we feel ourselves competent to answer will be answered by the Editor. We wish it to be distinctly understood that no personal questions will receive attention.

Question.—When a child of two or three years of age dies and is taken by its spirit friends to their home in the spirit world, does it feel the same longing to be with its mother as in the earthly state, and exhibit discontent and unhappiness in consequence?

Answer.—While on earth its mother is its natural, and, in a sense, its only sympathising friend and protector. Nature speaks loudly, but death—the change called death—alters to some extent the relationship. For every child, for every man and woman, there is a controlling or guardian spirit, between whom and themselves there exists the same affinity, love, attraction, as between a child and its mother. The laws of our being are so beautifully arranged that even our feelings shall not be injured by the change from earth to spirit life. The spirit child is attracted away to a plane of existence in which it enjoys a perfect degree of happiness. Here its great, in fact its only attracting influence, is that which was and is now its spirit guardian. This does not imply that all ties of affection are severed between its mother and it; they still exist, and often the child is brought back to earth to see its parents. But when the love principle is strongly developed, and the bringing back to earth is calculated to produce unhappy results, it is deferred until the child is stronger—more advanced—when its earth ties become weaker, and the ties of affection existing between the two spirits acquire greater strength. United as they are by this natural affinity which is the positive love principle, they must be harmonious, loving, and happy. The child becomes, at death, at once alive to the attraction of the spirit guardian, while it becomes oblivious to the instinctive craving for the earthly mother.

Question.—What disadvantage does a child dying young suffer, compared with a man who lives to maturity before leaving the earth life?

Answer.—The same disadvantage as an apple that is blown from the tree before it is ripe; losing all that experience and knowledge of earth life which is the foundation—the alphabet—of all knowledge to be attained by after experiences, and which, if not learned here, must be learned less perfectly hereafter, and under circumstances more difficult. Nature plainly states the conditions of earth life in such a manner that the infant, even in its earliest days begins to acquire a familiarity with them, and as every year passes it is enabled to acquire a knowledge of the laws of physical life which it could not gain in another state and under other circumstances. You have learned much by your experience, and the various passages of your life have made you conscious of laws in action which, but for that experience, you would now find it very difficult to form a conception of. By the use of your muscles you become physically strong; by the proper harmonious action of your digestive functions your body is well nourished, and by the happy unfoldment of your spiritual and intellectual powers you are constantly gaining a knowledge of earth life which without experience you can never gain. How little of the spiritual life you can know while in the material, and how little of the material life could you have known had you never possessed and exercised your material senses. The material senses discern only material things, while the spirit discerns those of the spirit. And you, after your years of experience can better investigate a material question than a child without that experience. For instance, if you were to tell a spirit, who had lived only a few months in earth life, that you eat solid substances, it would be to him something inconceivable; just as when we tell you, who are somewhat more advanced, that we eat fruit which satisfies our hunger—that we stand here with the fruit in our hands—you see it not, and you cannot conceive that anything apparently so immaterial can be of any service to sustain a living body. God's laws are perfect, and inasmuch as every child is born that it may become a man or woman, its death during childhood is a violation of God's law. The child, in order that the designs of his Creator may be accomplished, should live to maturity—to good old age—to gather knowledge of his material life and surroundings, and to grow naturally to that stage when—ripe for the change—he may be lifted to the higher life.

THE CLOCK STRUCK TWO.

TOWARDS the latter part of last year the methodist fraternity in the United States were startled out of their propriety by the publication by one of their most eminent ministers (Rev. Samuel Watson, L.L.D., &c.), of a book entitled "The Clock struck One, and Christian Spiritualist," wherein the author relates his spiritual investigations and experiences extending over several years, asserts his belief in spirit communion, and justifies that belief by the Bible, and also by the teachings of Wesley and Clarke, the two great exponents of the teachings of the Methodist Church. The book attracted a good deal of attention, and was of course pronounced heretical by the convention, the Rev. gentleman being required to recant, and withdraw the book from sale. This, however, he declined to do, and took the alternative of resigning his position in the Wesleyan Church, which he had filled with honor and credit for upwards of twenty-five years. In reference to Mr. Watson's sacrifice for principle, a writer in the "Memphis Weekly Ledger" says:—

"All honor to Rev. Mr. Watson, say we, and all honorable men, for his magnanimous immolation, his sublime self-sacrifice in withdrawing from one of the most popular and powerful denominations of the country, in which he had been an honored official for more than a quarter of a century, and for severing the sacred ties of a cherished friendship hallowed with thirty years. And all for what? For the simple and single conviction of truth? He is worthy to be canonized with Servetus and all those illustrious martyrs of truth whose spirits

shine around us like lights from eternity. In the mediaeval ages martyrdom was physical; now, the heroes of truth can only suffer moral martyrdom, thanks to modern progress and civilization. It makes no difference whether his theory, or faith, or philosophy, be true or false, he believes it, and freely offers himself a victim, a sacrificial victim, in vindication of his convictions of truth. He has proven himself a moral hero, and his old Church, his Alma Mater, should feel proud of having reared such a spirit."

Nevertheless, his "old Church" were not disposed to let him alone. The district conference condemned the book, and some of the luminaries of the Church, notably Dr. Guilford Jones and Rev. W. E. Boggs, the latter a Presbyterian Minister, wrote and spoke very freely and uncharitably of both book and author, making untruthful assertions in regard to both. Mr. Watson essayed to reply, but finding the ordinary channels closed to him, reviewed his reviewers, and thereby answered all objections in a pamphlet of 100 pages, entitled "The Clock struck Two, and Christian Spiritualism." This book has not yet reached us; we are indebted to the "Banner of Light" for the following able review of it:—

"The pamphlet is a clearly-printed issue of some one hundred pages, and is devoted thoroughly to the subject matter indicated by its title page printed above. The first critic-victim who writhes under the mental scalpel of Dr. Watson is Dr. Guilford Jones, who has reviewed the positions occupied in "The Clock Struck One" in a pamphlet of forty-eight pages, filled with erroneous conclusions and assertions wide of the truth. After quoting the following words of the editor of the Memphis Appeal as a true definition of his (Watson's) position, viz.: 'His Spiritualism, in justice to him, we are bound to state, is not what is commonly denominated Spiritism, but a Christian belief in spirits, which he holds to be in accordance with the Scriptures, and also in accordance with the views of Wesley and Clarke, the great exponents of the teachings of the Methodist Church,' Mr. W. proceeds to rebut Dr. Jones' charge that he (Watson) had put forth a revelation which was to be considered as equal to 'divine revelation' as understood by the church. Mr. W. states that he gave 'a faithful synopsis of the investigations made in this city (Memphis) in 1855, by twelve persons, all of whom were members of Protestant churches but three, who were sceptics,' and that, in all the communications that were received, 'no intimation of anything of that nature was ever given us at any time, but just the reverse. They professed to be fallible—liable to err and be mistaken in regard to many things. They simply gave us their views from the standpoint that they occupied, warning us against evil spirits, who might lead us into error.'

Even Dr. Jones found it necessary to bear witness to the talents and worth of Mr. Watson. The following extract from the 'Clock Struck Two' rehearses, in the words of Mr. W., his former position in the church, and a brief history of the events recently culminating in the withdrawal step he has taken:—

"As to the Doctor's compliments, and my being a 'clever man,' 'a truthful man,' 'and one that has held honorable rank among us,' I have nothing to say. If a residence in this city and vicinity as long as I have been here does not fix my reputation, nothing that can be written now of that character can affect it. I will remark, however, that I not only entertained the opinions promulgated in that book, but they were published in the religious as well as secular papers over seventeen years ago. This was well known before I was first elected by the Memphis Conference; and then by General Conference, representing the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as the editor of the Memphis Christian Advocate. How I filled this 'honorable' position does not become me to speak. I never professed to be anything but a plain, honest Methodist preacher, then or now. Suffice it to say, I was continued by the General Conference editor of that organ of the church for many years. I was then placed on the Memphis District as Presiding Elder, and was continued on there four years, which is as long as the discipline of the church would admit. I am now editing a paper by the appointment of our Bishops first, then by the election of

the General Conference which met in this city in 1870, and then by the unanimous election of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church of America. This is the most difficult and delicate official position I ever filled. In all of these relations I have never heard of one word that I wrote, or preached 'anything that was not in accordance with the Scriptures and the doctrines of the church, until "The Clock Struck One" made its appearance. Then the waters were troubled. The Western Methodist fired a "broadside" at it; Dr. Jones gave two lengthy articles in that paper respecting it; the paper was not sufficient, he must review it in a pamphlet. Next comes the District Conference resolution, and finally the annual Conference action in regard to it. I have "kept silence" until patience and forbearance have ceased to be virtues. Now I hope the smoke of battle has blown over, and we can all look at the question fairly and dispassionately.'

Dr. Jones having declared that, by reason of the position of its author, 'the prestige of the Methodist Church is to some extent tacked on to the book,' and 'that the world will hold us responsible for it for whatever evil it may produce unless we strike it down,' Mr. W. reiterates the statement contained in his first work, that 'I represent no one but myself; no sect, party, or church is in any sense responsible for what I have written,' and then says: 'Dr. Jones and others may attempt to strike it down,' but the great and glorious truth that the spirits of the departed do visit earth and communicate in various ways with those whom they have left behind, still remains.'

Further and copious extracts then follow from Wesley's journal to prove that the great founder of Methodism believed in the fact of spirit return upon 'the best human testimony'; also Adam Clarke, 'regarded as the most learned commentator who has ever written on the Scripture,' who says: 'I believe that any of these spirits may, according to the order of God in the laws of their place of residence, have intercourse with this world and become visible to mortals.'

The flippant remarks of Dr. Jones concerning the flower-producing qualities of the soil of the other country, and also with regard to some alleged discrepancies on the part of spirit communications mentioned in the first book, are dispatched with a few forcible remarks and citations, after which Mr. Watson denies the implied charge of Dr. J. that he (W.) desired to convey the idea 'that the Bible is *not* sufficient to convince man of immortality,' saying, 'I believe that those who believe and obey its precepts have the strongest evidence of immortality.' He refers to that great mass of scientific men of the age who demand something 'more tangible' than they have yet had to demonstrate that there 'is a state of being after the death of the body,' and says 'it was to that large, intellectual, scientific class who had not been brought under the influence of the Bible that I referred.'

Dr. Jones having enquired 'if his (Mr. Watson's) faith remains unshaken in the Gospel that brought life and immortality to light, why should he doubt or deny its sufficiency for others,' Mr. W. replies by quoting his statements in the 'Clock Struck One':

'I know that faith is powerful in its influence on the soul, but the time has come when even faith must be strengthened and reinforced by actual knowledge.' * * * 'Having proven, as I think, that the doctrine of intercourse between the natural and spiritual world is clearly taught in the Bible, under every dispensation, and having shown it to have been the belief of the early Christians, as well as the churches of the present time, the question now is, Can it be demonstrated that communications are now being made? I take the affirmative of this question. It is, as I conceive, but one step further than the universal belief of the church in all ages. Before giving the reasons for my belief, it may be well to inquire, Is there not a necessity for something more tangible than the world has had of immortality?' Is it not true that the pursuit of science has a materializing influence over a large portion of those who are engaged in such studies? Does not the human mind require to be moved by far different powers than those which rule the world of thought at the present time? Science tends to make men selfish and calculating, while religious dogmatism takes them further and further from the true and simple

grounds of faith. Is there not a necessity for a return, on the part of the churches, to the belief of the earliest Christians in direct and undisputed spirit-communion, and that it should not be regarded as at all miraculous in its nature, but a matter of ordinary experience and the sure evidence of religious faith? The world confesses to the same thing on every side. Almost everywhere is to be found a deadness of faith, and profession without practical belief. I know that faith is powerful in its influence on the soul; but the time has come when even faith must be strengthened and reinforced by actual knowledge. This want has been fully met in my own case for nearly a score of years. It has supplied that knowledge which I so much desired, and given vital efficacy to my faith, which nothing else could have done.

This comes, too, at the time it is most needed. Its office is to redeem mankind, who are blinded by materialism. To deny the return of persons who once lived here would, in my opinion, give to the Jewish dispensation the advantage over the Christian in this matter. There has been a gradual unfolding of the plans and purposes of God from the patriarchal age to the present. I believe that he designs this to be the means by which the last vestige of materialistic infidelity is to be driven from the world, and to greatly facilitate the time when the knowledge and glory of God shall cover the earth, and all flesh together see and rejoice in the salvation provided for the whole human family. I believe there is one simple truth to be demonstrated by these things; that is, man's immortality. No new revelation, no new doctrine or principle relative to the relation between the Creator and the creature is designed by these things. Therefore those who rely upon what they may have received as coming from spirits teaching anything contrary to the Bible are deceived. This is what I have always been taught, and is what I most sincerely believe. I cannot question the phenomena any more than I can any other facts of which my senses are capable of *judging*. There is, perhaps, as great a diversity of opinion in regard to some things in the spiritual as in the material world. Nor could I believe what comes from the former as readily as from the latter.

With these views, I give the facts which have come under my observation, leaving each one to exercise his judgment from the standpoint he may occupy, praying the blessing of God on all who may attach enough importance to them to read what is written, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to enable them to arrive at the truth.'

The remarkable tests of spirit-identity, witnessed by Mr. Watson through the mediumship of J. V. Mansfield, are rehearsed. Dr. Jones's statements that 'the *fac simile* autographs were either a forgery or an impossibility' to the contrary notwithstanding, and he (J.) is called upon to account in some more connected and reasonable way than the deception for the occurrences themselves, and the deductions to be drawn from them.

The 'demonic origin' theory for the spiritual phenomena, which Dr. Jones made the base of his operations, from which his lines were extended into the fields of hoped-for scientific explosion, air-drawn speculations and inane logic, is easily broken up by Mr. Watson—among other pungent sentences occurring the following:

"As a last resort, these things are turned over to evil spirits. I would ask him if he believes God would give to evil spirits that he will not grant to good ones. I understand St. Paul to say 'they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation.' Demon may be a good or bad spirit; but, as Bro. Jones seems disposed to look after the bad ones, I am not inclined to follow him."

In Chapter II. Mr. Watson reviews the grounds occupied concerning his work by the Rev. Wm. E. Boggs, pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church of Memphis, as printed in the Southern Presbyterian Review, in which the errors of Mr. W. are spoken of as existing in his first expectation through the so-called 'facts of Spiritualism to uphold the faith 'once delivered to the saints.' In his eyes, these spirit communications discover a special providence, unmasking just in the cri-

tical moment a powerful battery, with which the Christian Spiritualist shall utterly demolish the strongholds of Materialism, and usher in the millennium,' and, second, in 'his failure to inquire of God concerning the matter, instead of going, like Saul, to the Witch of Endor.'

Mr. Watson affirms, in answer, that he did 'go to God' with a sincere heart, and it was in his moments of prayer, when aloof from all mortal companionship, that he received his highest evidence in the 'demonstrations of the presence of persons with me (if my senses were capable of determining) which fully convinced me of the truth of spirit intercourse. I did not 'go to the Witch of Endor' at any time, nor to see any medium or visit any circle, until these manifestations had been in my house for over a year.'

Mr. Boggs, having assumed that Mr. Watson was mesmerized by Mr. Mansfield, or that in some unexplainable manner his (W.'s) mind was depleted of its secrets to aid the so-called medium in his deception, he is confronted with the query as to how information could be given him (W.) by an entire stranger concerning facts of which he himself was ignorant, and which after inquiry proved to be true, relating to persons said medium had never seen or heard of?

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the old laws of Moses, &c., dragged in by the worthy Mr. Boggs in his efforts to deploy a sufficient line of battle to be worthy of attention, are then clearly treated by Mr. Watson. With the following beautiful paragraphs on 'Ministering Angels' the consideration of this chapter must be dismissed:

'The Bible distinctly says there is a class of spirits who minister to the children of men. Is it likely, then, that in selecting subordinate agencies, this, so necessary a requisite of human life and experience, would be overlooked? Spirits now sainted, but thrillingly conscious of a past experience of sin and sorrow, and a soul in sympathy with temptations and struggles like their own, is it not more than probable that, in the economy of grace, those who are familiar with earth life, and have left many loved ones here, would be the ones whom God would permit to minister to them, instead of those abstract spirits whose knowledge and experience are comparatively so distinct and so cold? May we not, then, look among the bands of ministering spirits for our departed ones? Have we no friend 'over there' who knew us to the heart's core—a friend to whom we unfolded the secret recesses of our soul—to whom we have confessed our weaknesses and deplored our griefs—who so well adapted to be our ministering spirit as such a friend? I doubt not that the relations we sustain to each other here are to some extent perpetuated there. The poet says—

'Can a mother's tender care
Cease towards the child she bare.'

I answer, never, while she retains her nature and memories of her earth-life. She would fain electrify the heart of her child. She yearns to make her impress for good upon its soul, and to inspire it with a spiritual and holy life.

So also to generous souls who have consecrated their lives to promote the good of their fellow-man; but, alas! how short has been the time allotted to this glorious work! A few fleeting years and the frail body moulders to its mother earth, but the soul still loves humanity and feels strong desires to elevate mankind to the high destiny which awaits them. With a field greatly enlarged, with facilities increased perhaps a thousand-fold, he starts away upon the glorious work upon which he consecrated his life while on earth.

Think not, then, minister, father, mother, brother, sister, labouring here for man, when your sun stands on the western mountains that your day in this world is over. You have lived a human life, you have gained a human experience, the better to qualify you for the glorious future. Yours may have been a hard lot. The severe discipline and afflictions through which you have passed have but the better qualified you to sympathize with suffering humanity. You will find yourselves the delighted possessors of what through many years you so much sighed for—the power of doing good.'

Chapters III., IV. and V. are devoted to a consideration of many important matters, such as the charges and spe-

cifications made against Mr. Watson in Conference—'Home Investigation,' 'Mrs. Hollis's Seances,' 'Spirits among the Catholics,' etc., etc., many of which have hitherto been either published or editorially referred to by the Banner of Light.

The book is compactly written, and contains not a single phrase which is not to the point. It deserves to be made a campaign tract, and, together with its predecessor, 'The Clock Struck One,' which it so ably defends, should be circulated throughout the camp of Orthodoxy. Of course the old idea of the insanity of their writer has been brought out as the last resort of the Church against a spirit she could no longer chain, but the poor feint is rapidly beaten down in the following pungent paragraph from a Memphis correspondent, with which we close the present article:

'As for mental aberration or insanity, Socrates, Pythagoras, Swedenborg, and all the illustrious lights of the past who lived ahead of their generation, were called insane. And at this day his (Watson's) demented (?) company consists of Archbishop Whately, Professor De Morgan, Gerald Massey, Hiram Powers, Lord Lindsay, Lord Dunraven, Garibaldi, Victor Hugo, Jules Favre, Leon Favre, Guizot, Kossuth, Judge Chase, Judge Lawrence, Judge Ladd, Hon. B. F. Wade, N. P. Banks, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Senators Harris, Fitch, Stewart, and names without number eminent for intellectuality on both sides of all the seas. Jew, Gentile, Christian, Sceptic, Pagan, Moslem, and Giaour, and all creeds alike, and all earth's children may come and lay their offerings on this universal altar of natural philosophy [Spiritualism.] It is indeed, and verily, a glorious evangel that weaves a woof of hope around the heart of despair and winds its warp within the storied temple of immortality.'

M. HOUDIN AND SPIRITUALISM.

In an article on the Maskelyne and Cook performances, the *Spiritual Magazine* for April publishes the following extract:—

Le Messager, of Liege, contains in three consecutive numbers accounts of seances held in the presence of Robert Houdin; of his astonishment, and his final admission of marvels not within the range of his capacities as a legerdemain professor. Robert Houdin had a world-wide reputation, and so thoroughly master was he of the art of deception, that, when the members of the French Academy were asked to look into the phenomena of Spiritualism, they silenced all appeals in that direction by referring to Houdin. He had been in Algiers just previous to my arrival there, and had bewildered both Kabyl and Moor. The wild Tuarigs had carried his name far into the desert, for he had been invited by Marshal Randon to exhibit before them. They said to the Marshal, 'Why do you war with gun and sabre, when you have such men among you as Houdin, who, by his black art, could sweep us all from the earth?' M. Houdin, in his seances with M. Alexis, when in a somnambulic state, was deeply moved at what he heard and saw. Perfectly blindfolded, M. Alexis picked out cards designated, read documents that were hidden from every one's view, visited distant places, told by a lock of hair the age of M. Houdin's son at the time it was taken from the boy's head, and told him he was at that moment being very seriously betrayed by one whom he trusted as a friend. Nearly everything could be verified on the spot; but the latter assertion required time and time showed that his friend, at the time specified, had robbed him of ten thousand francs. M. Houdin finally wrote: "I came from this exhibition as much astonished as it is possible to be, and persuaded entirely of the impossibility that hazard or *adresse* could ever produce such marvellous results." What will the *savans* of the Academy now say?

See also the account of a seance Houdin had with Mr. D. D. Home, given in Home's *Incidents of my Life*; and in regard to Signor Bosco, the letter of Mr. T. Adolphus Trollope in the *Report of the Committee of the Dialectical Society*. Similar admissions might be quoted as to the Davenport manifestations; but as to these we must be content here to refer the reader to Nichols's *Lives of the Brothers Davenport*.

THE "EVANGELIST" OF DUNEDIN, ON VICTORIAN AFFAIRS.

THE June number of the above polemical publication, contains, among other nonsense, an absurd attack on the intelligence of the people of Victoria. Speaking of the Education Act, the Melbourne correspondent of the "Evangelist" indulges in the following violent and indecent language:—

"Scholastic affairs are no better than when I last wrote. This *unmitigated national swindle* does not give satisfaction to any but *the beggarly characters* that take advantage of it." Now, seeing that the public of Victoria have given to Mr. Stephen's great legislative and social measure as warm a welcome as they could well express, and as men of the highest social and intellectual standing have freely offered their services on the Boards of Advice, it is clear that all classes, except dogmatic theologians, approve the measure which is crowding the State schools, and holding out to the rising generation some hope of escaping from the clutches of superstitious sectarians. If this "unmitigated national swindle" gives no satisfaction, except to "the beggarly characters" who support it, then it is evident, that in the estimation of the correspondent of a magazine "devoted to the advancement of evangelical religion," any far-seeing and statesmanlike attempt to educate and civilize the whole community—an attempt for which the whole community will cheerfully pay—such an attempt is, forsooth, a "national swindle," and the nation approving it is composed of "beggarly characters." Well, be it so, and by and bye we shall have an entire change in the signification of language. But the purveyor of news to the elect of Otago, spits venom from his Carlton stronghold, on other classes than the friends of Education in Victoria. He savagely attacks the Church of England. "She is a traitress; a heartless, soulless thing. Her preachers are men, many of them apparently ignorant of the first principles of religion." To treat upon the existence of hell, gains for one clergyman the title of "a clerical mountebank," another is "evidently a weak, vain man, who has published his nonsense in the form of a pamphlet," showing that compared to him "Christ and Plato were but children." Even Presbyterianism is stigmatised as "bad enough," and as for Spiritualism, this cruel critic has laid upon the back of a system which has existed since the days of Jacob's vision, that last straw which is proverbially fatal to long-suffering and patient animals.

The Reverend tub thumper of Carlton has said it, the hosts of heaven must interest themselves in human affairs no more. However, one ray of hope is to be allowed to glimmer; the Holy Spirit may still be invoked by reverend correspondents of distant magazines, and persuaded by prayer and fasting, to lend His aid to the vilification and abuse of those neighbours, whom His petitioner professes *with his lips* to love, as much as all Christians invariably love one another.

Shame! Shame on the ordained clergyman that could write such a letter. Shame on the ordained clergyman that could make room for it in a magazine "devoted to the advancement of evangelical religion." If these are the means by which evangelical religion is to be advanced, then it may safely be left to its own devices. "*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*"

The "Evangelist" has an article on the "Pecuniary support of the Church" in Otago, proving and admitting that, there at least, their system "does not suit the popular taste," and that it is "growing poorer almost every year." This information is a ground of hope, because, while on the one hand, it deters young men from embracing a profession which has *Starvation* written over its entrance; on the other, it hastens the end of a system which has outlived its usefulness, and become

"A fixed figure, for the time of scorn
To point his slow and moving finger at."

Spiritualism is the means by which the slumbering nations are being awakened from religious torpor, and Mr. Peebles' action, in these colonies, calls for almost any other taunt than that of "cowardice," which the Carlton calumniator brings against him. Moral courage is more useful than any other virtue, for it shelters

and protects the others. Now, Mr. Peebles was endowed with moral courage in the highest degree; and when Mr. Peebles and his Carlton critic stand before the judgment seat which they both believe in, we could make a pretty safe guess, which of the two will be declared the brave man, and which the coward.

If for every idle word that men shall speak they must give an account, that reckoning will be sufficiently searching, to satisfy all observers, that the cause of "evangelical religion" is not to be promoted, except by the means advocated by sincere believers in the science of communication, which has been, in this age, in all countries, and among all classes, opened up between this world and the next.

THE OPERATIONS OF ANTICHRIST."

A Lecture delivered at the Masonic Hall, Melbourne.

"As ye have heard that Antichrist must come, even now there are many Antichrists.—I John 2. 18."

I THINK we have excellent reasons for supposing that John was a medium of the very highest type, and of a thoroughly reliable character, who attracted within his atmosphere intelligences of a very wise and celestial nature. Before his long life had ended, he wrote—evidently under inspiration—his Gospel, three epistles to the world at large, and the celebrated Apocalypse.

The Revelations are supposed to have been dictated, under very favorable conditions, in the seclusion of Patmos, by the purified and exalted spirit thrown on earth as Jesus of Nazareth; whom we are told John clairvoyantly saw in Patmos, spoke to, and wanted to worship. We must bear in mind the enthusiasm which John felt for his great ideal, and recollect that when the Revelations were given, the spirit of Jesus had been upwards of 60 years out of his body, and as the nature of that exalted and pure spirit was as nearly perfect as any thing finite could be, his progress in knowledge and general development, would be very great in the 63 years which elapsed, between his murder on Calvary, and his dictation of the Revelations, through his old friend and favorite disciple.

In John's epistles, which do not, I think, display the wonderful insight manifest in the Revelations, the features of true Christianity shine out, nevertheless, in a most remarkable manner; justifying their use as a touchstone, whereby we may distinguish between the Christ, and the Antichrist which John and others of his colleagues said had already come; between the teachings called by the name of Christ which were true, and the teachings called by the name of Christ which were untrue; between Christian purity and anti-Christian impurity; between mock professions of Christlike feeling proclaimed in the synagogues and churches, and the villainous actions of these followers of Antichrist in the market places and houses of human resort; between the Divine religion which appears in the life and actions of the few, and the burlesque upon religion which appears in the life and actions of the many; between the forgery and the genuine article; between the unsuccessful Christ of poverty and sorrow, and the prosperous Christ of luxury and lust; in fine, between the divine system which Jesus taught, and which contemplated, and will yet effect, a lodgment in the hearts of all the people, and the cursed system which succeeded for a time in establishing itself upon the ruins of human happiness, cemented its walls by the tears and sufferings of nature's nobility, and elevated itself to an unnatural height by standing upon the dead body of religious hope. A system of which the world is beginning to weary, seeing that under its iron heel true religious sentiment has been all but annihilated, and when, among the gifted, the honest open profession of domestic creeds has, as Macaulay said of vice, come to be regarded as "the sure mark of a fool." Yet, thank God, the reaction to the reign of Antichrist is setting in. Many of the first men in England—not in holy orders, as it is called—are no longer ashamed to be considered devout. Some of the highest minds among the upper classes are setting the example of giving Sunday evening lectures, and free thought, education, and free discussion are becoming

quite fashionable: consequently, in such an atmosphere Antichrist must choke.

All the different sects cry out to their followers, Lo! here is Christ, or lo! there; we are told upon high authority to believe them not. When Christ said, "Many shall come in my name and deceive many," he meant the blustering sects of Christendom. The means of identification are complete, but the operations of Antichrist have spread over a wider field than Christendom. In different countries it has taken different names, each name being that of a high spiritual ideal, all of them merging their differences in one common claim, of a joint and several patent of precedence, and infallibility, under the hand of Almighty God Himself.

Thus we have Roman Catholicism, Mahometanism, and Protestantism,—the Pope, the Prophet, and the Book,—as the chief branches of an infallible system, which loves its enemies with a curious love, invariably does good to those who hate it, and models its conduct with the utmost nicety, on the pattern supplied by the pure and suffering author of the "Sermon on the Mount."

Who ever knew a Christian sect to love its enemies, and do good to those who hate it? Perhaps the Quakers are the only long established sect which has tried to do so; but all others who have been persecuting and intolerant at any period in their history, have been animated by the spirit—not of Christ, but of Antichrist,—not of heaven, but of hell.

During the long reign of Antichrist upon earth, the Roman Catholics, the Mahometans, and the Protestants, have persecuted to the death, hundreds of thousands of noble souls, of whom the world was not worthy. Antichrist has had no mercy on "the fearless, the truth-loving, and the intelligent," but has showered favors without number, on "the rough and ferocious, on the servile, the indifferent, and the stupid;" used these as convenient tools, with which to organise and execute the various massacres, which darken the pages of history.

The proverb no longer holds good, that "dead men tell no tales." The graves of the centuries are being opened at last, and the victims of anti-Christian brutality are coming forth, to bear witness against their oppressor.

"In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
"A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
"The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
"Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

In the light supplied by modern Spiritualism, the impositions of those who have deceived many, are being made apparent to all but the "servile, the indifferent, and the stupid;" to all who care to investigate subjects of real importance, and of such the numbers are increasing every day. We see the richest and most prosperous sect in Victoria, the Presbyterians, complaining of the spirit which is abroad of "hostility to the clergy."

There is no hostility to them individually, but there is a widespread feeling of hostility abroad to the system they represent. If they were true Christians they would love their enemies, but it is quite apparent they do not love Spiritualists, who wish them no harm, and look upon them, with much the same feelings as would be excited by the passing of a convict who was going to his doom, and whose last dying speech and confession might even cause the virtuous to drop a sympathetic tear. The authorities of the Church of England tell us their clergy are starving. And this then is the result, of all their prayers and their much speaking; this is the outcome of their splendid opportunities, and long tenure of the public ear. It seems that the moral state of society under their auspices has become worse instead of better; they have had the training of the young, and the intimidation of the old, and the principal result of their stewardship appears in the despairing cry, "Our clergy are starving in the midst of plenty." They had better confess at once: "We have been unprofitable servants, we have been weighed in the balances and found wanting, we have been ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth, we are mistaken in thinking that by continually calling out Lord, Lord, we are safe to get into the kingdom of heaven."

Is it not a noticeable fact, that while human nature is manifestly unfolding higher and more spiritual proclivi-

ties, religion as a trade, as an occupation of Antichrist, is rapidly falling into most deserved contempt. I speak of the system, not of its professors,—most of them virtuous and respectable, but narrow-minded, deluded, and afraid of the light, yet "with loads of learned lumber in their heads." I fancy the system is to the best of them utterly repugnant. Creed-bound, fettered, and self condemned, they would escape if they had none but themselves to consider, but they have wives and families many of them, and a few of them houses and lands, and they differ with Christ in this,—they insist that there are sacrifices too great to be made, even for Him. The system of anti-Christianism allows them to follow the truth, only, so far as it can be done, without offending the prejudices of rich supporters, or changing into bitter enemies those of their own household. The result is widespread insincerity, and all but universal cant and hypocrisy,—at least among those whose success in religious trade, depends upon the goodwill of their seatholders.

So much for the clergy. The educated laity view the exposure of Antichrist with the bitter feelings of men who know they have been duped. The *London Spectator* writing on the subject, represents very forcibly the sentiments of this class, as follows:—"One of the most marked signs of the times is the extent to which irreligion is becoming a religion, a fanaticism as fierce and as propagandist as any creed has ever been. The laughing scepticism of polite society is vanishing away, and in its place we have a propagandist spirit which cannot be content without overt acts. Our readers remember the astounding explosion of Materialism in Belgium among the students from all parts of the world who assembled at Liege, to advertise their scorn and hatred of the ideas involved in the words 'God' and 'soul,' and 'revelation' and 'church;' a scorn and hate to which words seemed inadequate to give expression, except in phrases that smelt of blood; their words being accompanied by a desire not merely to quit, but to put down the church, as an evil thing, a foe to human society." A distinguished public writer, lately deceased, declared his belief that "Paganism is winning, that the Continent is on the eve of a burst of irreligion, or hatred to religion, such as even the Revolution did not produce." In the presence of such facts nothing can be more opportune than the advent of Spiritualism, the second coming of the true Christ, in power and glory. An English bishop, Dr. Wordsworth, is reported to have appealed to the clergy of his diocese in these words:—"I earnestly crave the advice and the prayers of all; the times in which we live show that we need unity. It needs no prophetic spirit to foretell that times of great trial await, not only the Church of England, but the whole of Christendom."

An accomplished scholar and a great wit, Thomas Woolston, published, 150 years ago, a short statement of his faith, which made a tremendous sensation at the time. As this novel creed is very short, and not as well known as it deserves to be, and as it is very much to the point, I will tell you what it is:—"I believe, on the authority of the Fathers, that the Ministry of the letter of the Old and New Testament is downright Antichristianism. I believe, upon the authority of the Fathers, that the miracles of Jesus, literally understood, are the lying wonders of Antichrist. I believe upon the authority of the Fathers, that the Ministry of the letter and an hireling priesthood, have been the cause of the infidelity, and apostacy, of these latter times. I believe upon the authority of the Fathers, that the spirit and power of Jesus will soon enter the Church, and expel hireling priests who make merchandise of the gospel, out of her, after the manner he is supposed to have driven the buyers and sellers out of the temple."

Now you see how clearly Woolston stereotyped the features of that anti-Christian system "which," as Buckle puts it, "has brought so much misery and ruin on the world." I wish to treat this important subject with studied moderation. I know human nature to be so constituted, that in times of quietness there is a strong disinclination to contemplate unpleasant possibilities; and that in times of uproar, there is quite as strong a tendency to run to the other extreme. The demand at present, among the timid and the discreet, is for pleasant

things, agreeable reflections, smooth sing-song commonplaces, that will tickle the ear for the moment, and leave no sting behind. It has been hinted to me, that as we have been accustomed so long, to speak with bated breath of subjects which lie at the very root of social science, that therefore we should continue as Edmund Burke said, to treat them with "a wise and salutary neglect." This is quite true of reforms for which the public mind is not prepared, but the same great writer adds, that "a time must come when forbearance ceases to be a virtue." A time will come when every possible subject will be considered in all its bearings, and with the spread of education will come an extension of the limits of thought, which would be considered blasphemous to a degree, if encouraged now. Blasphemy means finding fault with the inchoation of the works of God, and as man is one of the principal works of the Creator, whoever finds fault with man's original nature, and consigns him in words, to eternal perdition, as altogether bad, is guilty of the rankest blasphemy. Whoever preaches the doctrine of original sin, and the damnation of infants, is to a very great extent guilty of conduct the very opposite to that of Christ, and all conduct opposed in thought, word, or deed, to the precepts of Jesus, is Antichristian. Did Christ ever recommend the burning of heretics, or the persecution of Jews, or the foundation of monasteries, or the establishment of inquisitions, or the torture of witches, or the use of armed savages to establish Episcopalianism in a Presbyterian country? Who authorised the scandalous outrages perpetrated on humanity in the name of Christ, which have disgraced the ages since he appeared? Antichrist. Who lit the fires of Smithfield? Who massacred the Waldenses, and the Huguenots? Who flooded the streets of Edinburgh with freebooters, licensed to hunt down the Covenanters, and silence the opponents of Episcopacy? Who has the most reason to dread the spread of knowledge, and to fear the development of free thought? Antichrist. Depend upon this; the human mind as at present constituted is no blunder; notice the progress which the human race has made in the last 50 years, since the power of Antichrist has been deadened, by the second coming of the spirit of liberty sent by God "to prepare the way before Him." Reflect upon the progress of science during 25 years, upon the development of the means of locomotion and communication, upon the facilities which exist for sending intelligible words, like electric needles through the heaving bosom of the ocean, and then tell me if you dare, that the race is cursed of God, and can only be saved, by belief in a scheme which ended by the chief actor declaring, that God had forsaken him. Is the cup from which we would drink to the future possibilities of humanity to be everlasting supplied from "a fountain filled with blood?" Not so. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." What a contrast, what a noble belief is this; no Antichrist said that. No. Antichrist has always had a strong disposition to alter arrangements which were admitted to be those of the Architect of the Universe—in short, has flung so much mud and abuse at God's creatures, from pulpits and platforms, that a violent reaction has set in, and serious doubts are being felt by religious minds not yet relieved by Spiritualism, serious doubts, whether the universal cosmogony is founded on the principles of wisdom at all.

Is this the unhappy fruit of the preaching of the Gospel of Christ? Not so, it is the effect of the unconscious and stupid promulgation of a base imitation, which, exalting the name of Jesus, and his mother, above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, has fulfilled to the letter the prognostications of the inspired writers, who foretold the exposure of the Man of sin, trading on the peculiarities of human nature, for the development of which, sin is an educational necessity. Anti-Christianism has mingled in one common destruction the fairest women and the bravest men, and darkened the records of the past, with the life blood of "all the saints and all the sages that have been slain upon the earth." But you may say—Why open up these old sores? Why pursue these murderers with relentless hatred? I answer, I bear them no hatred, I pursue the criminals because they have escaped so far, and all who know them

should join in the hue and cry. I open up old sores, because they are beginning to fester beneath the scabrous crust of prosperity; because they show signs of becoming more offensive; because, as Shakespeare has it,

"Foul deeds will rise,

"Though all the earth o'erwhelm them to men's eyes."

I can sincerely pity the adherents of such a system: I would gladly help them, as I would help the innocent children of vicious parents. I wish I could induce them to "come out of that false one that they partake not of her plagues," but even if they did escape, habit is so strong, they could hardly refrain from acting like Lot's wife in the fable, and cast one lingering look behind. The profession of Divinity, with its numerous mysteries and confusing incomprehensibilities, is summed up by the inspired writer in one word—Babylon—a word which signifies mixed or confused. The modern Babel or Babylon has on its forehead the fearful brand, "*Mystery—The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.*"

Mystery is the leading feature of all the chief dogmas of ecclesiastical life, and harlots, unhappily, are a prominent topic of discussion among anti-Christian communities just now. It is not pleasant to have to speak in this way of a system in which for many fruitless years one has lived a Pharisee, and from which one has been delivered, so to speak, by a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun. Lest friends of lukewarmness should think my language too severe at this point I would beg your attention to the words of Milton, whose piety and genius have shed an immortal lustre on the English name. Milton in his famous *Apology*, published in 1642, after the Restoration, tenders some advice to the sovereign, in much the same way that Tennyson would do now, advises the monarch to check the usurpations of the hierarchy, and proceeds to expose the many shifts and wiles the prelates of the Church of England invented, to save their ill-gotten booty; and he uses these remarkable and vigorous words—"If it be true, as in Scripture it is foretold, that pride and covetousness are the sure marks of those false prophets which are to come, then boldly conclude these to be as great seducers as any of the latter times. For between this and the judgment day, do not look for any arch deceivers, who in spite of reformation, will use more craft, or less shame, to defend their love of the world, and their ambition, than these prelates have done." There is no mistake about that language, and there is no question about the genius and insight of Milton. I will further strengthen the position I take up by a few words from another famous man—a professional theologian too. Bishop Burnet was a man of vast influence in the stirring times of the Reformation; and is credited by many with being one of the Whig founders of the British Constitution. Burnet wrote the "*History of his own Times*," but carefully provided against its publication until after his own death, fearing the consequences of plain speaking in his lifetime. "The main body of our clergy," he says, "has always appeared dead and lifeless to me, and instead of animating one another, they seem rather to lay one another asleep, and let me say this very freely, now that I am out of the reach of envy and censure, unless a better spirit possess the clergy, arguments; and what is more, laws and authority, will not prove strong enough to preserve the Church;" and a little further on, he admits, that a system which could only be characterised as Antichristianism, will not long survive the emancipation of the human mind.

Now here are two leading theologians of the era of the Reformation, Milton and Burnet, both pointing out the anti-Christian character of the reformed church system to which they belonged. If the system admitted of the use of such very strong language in Milton's day, how much more will it admit of it in the times in which we live, when the once pure stream has become so putrid, that it actually taints the whole atmosphere of religious life.

It is simply deplorable to consider that so much time should have been wasted in bolstering up error, so much money thrown away, so much talent, so much study, so much valuable effort, so many splendid opportunities for leisurely reflection, "ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth," so much sincere de-

votion, paralysed by a system of creeds and ceremonies, called, it is true, by the name of Christ, but having nothing, but the name, in common with the divine simplicity of the carpenter's son.

The true Christ was the representative, for the time being, of the truth which "was in the beginning with God, and without whom was not anything made that was made." The true Christ was not *the form*, the outer shell of the Son of Mary; he himself said, "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life," and again, "My doctrine is not mine," "I of myself can do nothing," that which "dwelleth within me doeth the works." You may recollect the incident when he was puzzled by the Scribes and Pharisees bringing to him the woman taken in adultery—what did he do? "Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground as though he heard them not," and having obtained his answer by means of an impressionable writing, he announced a doctrine which he declared was not his own. "*And again he stooped down and wrote on the ground,*" and then having, by the first mechanical writing, answered his questioners, by the second he was directed to say to the woman, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

We live in an age when the means of getting advice which Jesus used, has come to the Son of Man once more, when the long-looked for Messiah, accompanied by all the signs which attended his first advent, are apparent in the second, only this time with power and great glory; when the princes and the *really great* men over all the earth are being attracted to its light, and kings to the brightness of its rising—when "the light that never was on sea or shore" is seen through all the world, "from the river to the ends of the earth; and when the anointed of heaven appears to all who earnestly look for Him, "without sin unto salvation." We have seen how the torches of Antichrist only served to throw into relief the darkness of Christendom in the middle ages. The smouldering ashes of these infernal fires have hardly ceased to smoke, before the form of Antichrist is discernible, riding on the whirlwind of opposition to science, opposition to human elevation, an opposition as determined, and as futile, as when it pandered to the worst passions of cruel natures, and persecuted to the uttermost the real servants of the Most High. Antichrist,—

"Thy doom hath been for ages,
"Seen by every eye but thine,
"Flashing wide from out the pages
"Of a prophecy Divine."

Who is it that now maintains a deceptive silence of evil omen, while the religious feelings of our race are stirred to their very centre? Who has been the bitterest enemy to scientific research? Who would, if it dared, trample out Spiritualism, the legitimate outcome of scientific enlightenment, the key handed to mankind from heaven by which to unlock the storehouses of the Deity? Who would crush out this means of saving mankind from blank, hopeless materialism, and blind despair? Antichrist. But thanks to the Father of Light, all power, or nearly all power, has gone from the Antichrist for ever, unmasks by its own conduct, despised by the press, which has been the fearless advocate of the blessings of knowledge and free discussion, impoverished by the declining contributions of a faithless people, Antichrist still stands, a melancholy remnant of his former greatness, disintegrated and split up into a thousand sects, morally disorganised and spiritually corrupt, it waits, like the late French Empire, the blow which, while exposing its inherent rottenness, will at the same time sink it

"Through caverns measureless to man,
"Down to a sunless sea."

Antichrist, robed in the garb of an angel of light, "has deceived many, and by his sorceries were all nations deceived, in whom was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea, saying, 'Thus with violence shall that great city, Babylon, be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.'

"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia! For God our Lord the Omnipotent reigneth."

MR. CHARLES H. FOSTER.

We are in receipt of advices from the above named gentleman, and world-renowned Medium, of his intention to visit Melbourne within three months of the present time. Mr. Foster is a high class test medium, the manifestations through whom have been the means of convincing thousands of shrewd and sceptical enquirers. We reprint the following report of a recent seance with him, from the Philadelphia "Press" of Tuesday April 1st, and shall give further notices of Mr. Foster's extraordinary powers in future issues.

THE OTHER WORLD.

FOSTER, THE SPIRITUAL MAGICIAN, INTERVIEWED.

A Spiritual Seance—Room No. 110 at the Continental Hotel—A New Phase of a Reporter's Life—Skepticism and Belief—Startling manifestations of Power to Look into the Secrets of the Past and the Present—Hidden Things Told in Letters of Blood—Jim Fisk and the Price of Gold—A Village Romance—Spiritualism in its Most Potent Form.

"Mr. —, I wish you would go to Room 110, Continental Hotel, to day at 4 o'clock, and take this letter of introduction to Mr. C. H. Foster, spiritual medium, and see if anything of interest to the public takes place in his rooms."

A bow signifying assent, a sneer signifying utter and entire scepticism and unbelief, interspersed with a few words, *sotto voce*, which sounded very much like "Humbug," "charlatan," might have been noticed about the action, manner, and words of the representative of THE PRESS as yesterday at noon he read the above "assignment to duty."

"Four o'clock arrived and the reporter presented himself at the clerk's desk and asked that a servant show him to room 110, where "some of these spiritual people are supposed to be," every word and look denoting incredulity.

"He has just gone into the bar-room, sir," was the reply, and the servant was directed to "point the gentleman out to the gentleman."

"Mr. Foster, I believe?" was addressed to a gentleman—evidently a gentleman, for his quiet, unpronounced dress; his clear-cut, delicate, but manly features; his hand, ear, foot, complexion, shapely head, and softly-modulated and completely controlled voice, all denoted the gentleman—a first-blush criticism which was subsequently wholly confirmed by the social intercourse of half an hour. We say this formal approach to an introduction was addressed to a gentleman standing at the bar, in the act of drinking a glass of sherry with his agent, Mr. G. C. Bartlett, for it was no other than Mr. Foster, "one of those spiritual people."

Mr. Foster was glad to meet the representative of THE PRESS in his individual capacity, introduced as the latter was, but he had no special desire to be made the subject of an interview unless it was in aid of the cause of truth. "That sounds like their cant," thinks the reporter to himself, "but we shall see.")

"Well, sir" (with the usual *brusquerie* of the journalist, who has no time to lose in conventionalities, for the paper must go to press at a certain time)—"Well, sir, let me grasp the situation at once, and I confess candidly that I have not even a scintilla of doubt as to the falsity of Spiritualism and its varied forms and phases of humbug and jugglery, contrived and carried out for the purpose of entrapping the simple-minded, credulous ones who are always willing to prove in their own persons the truth of 'the fools are not all dead yet.' First, who are you, for I confess never to have heard of C. H. Foster?" The gentleman smiled meaningfully in answer to the first part of the abrupt address of the journalist, and his smile

passed into a quiet laugh as if at the ignorance of the speaker as to who he, Mr. Foster, was. Indeed his remark followed the laugh. Turning to his friend, he said: "I have not heard such charming *naivete* for many a long day. It is quite refreshing to be spoken to in this way."

Passing by the by-plays and spicy sparring which always arise between a skeptic and a believer on almost any subject, the party, now augmented to the number of five (for a stranger and also a friend of the journalist had come up in the meantime) passed up stairs to "room No. 110."

The ordinary caparison of a room in a hotel, with the usual number of stands and trunks and chairs, &c., was noticed more for the absence of machinery and juggler's boxes, and absurd tokens, and cards, and all the varied contrivances for imposing upon the credulity of people who usually sit at the feet of these mountebanks. We say these things were conspicuous by their absence; still the utter want of faith of the newspaper man was not shaken in the ability of the quiet, gentlemanly man to even guess, with any degree of accuracy, at commonplace occurrences of the past or to fortell any more of the future than any man of ordinary judgment and a knowledge of men and things could do.

As the journalist approaches his subject more closely, he feels that his usual impersonality must be sometimes sunk as he recites his experiences for that one-half hour in that medium's room. These experiences are not simply strange, unaccountable, mysterious, or any of the words which denote the idea of things unaccounted for by natural causes—they are simply "awful." The writer feels as though he were drifting into sacrilege in his endeavour to give, or to conceive of an idea of the power of this man. When the reporter saw this man look back over long years of time and long miles of space and down deep into the mouldering dust of long-forgotten graves, and drag up to the clear light of the present noonday sun of Philadelphia, thoughts from the inmost recesses of the heart of a woman who in life would hardly have confessed those thoughts to herself—when he saw the name of the woman and that of the man she loved (names which the inquirer had himself almost forgotten, time and circumstance having almost completely blotted them out of memory)—when he saw those names written in plain, distinct characters, in letters formed of the living blood at that moment coursing through the hand of Foster—he could not refrain from yielding to the impulse to cry out in ideal pain and awe-striking fear, stagger up from the table and walk about the room till a modified calmness came to his excited feelings. And yet these were but the mere rudiments of the "art," if it may be so-called; but it may not be so called, even though the loss of a word leaves the sentence unfinished, for it was no "art" that enabled this man to read the events of the past and its dead, the present and its living, to tell of deeds done years ago and forgotten by their actors, of thoughts conceived of at the passing moment and unshaped even in the brain of the thinker. It was no "art" that gave this man the power to look into the heart of a woman far away and tell her secret which she had concealed religiously for years. It was no art, it was—but the pen of the journalist refuses to write the impious thought when he knows that he writes about the power of a mortal such as you and I and all of us are.

Mr. Foster spoke truth when he made the remark: "Mr.—, I will reveal to you things that you would not dare publish; they are too sacred; they touch family, social, and heart relations too nearly even to be mentioned by the faintest allusion." And the listener paid the penalty for his skepticism and scoffing even to the uttermost farthing; such a penalty the amount of which he dare not publish; It is "too sacred."

Now just here let there be a disentanglement from some of the involved, awkward sentences which have thus far been written under the impulse of an excited, overwrought sensitiveness brought on by the startling, awful revelations of this "Spiritual Medium," and let matter-of-fact realism retake its sway, and the brain of the writer resume its normal action.

The financier, the stranger, the agent, the reporter, and the central figure, the "medium," took seats at a table carelessly, and without any design or choice as to location.

Mr. Foster talked quietly to our representative, of course about the subject which was uppermost in the minds of all—spiritualism. Among other things he said: "I always leave my own personality out. A man comes to see spiritualism, not me. If the thing does not show for itself, why, I cannot make it. Any man who attempts to convince the world of a truth must let the truth speak for itself, and not throw the weight of personal influence or presence into it. Now, you are a perfect unbeliever and I am glad of it, for I want such a man as you to investigate, or at least to observe the phenomena of spiritualism." Talking all the time naturally, and without any straining after effect, such as one would expect from a man self-convinced of his extraordinary powers, Mr. Foster, as though casually, took up a piece of paper from the reporter's roll of "note" paper, and tore it into little strips. And then, without more ado, without any jugglery of action, or noticeable change of manner or thought, he addressed the stranger—we call a stranger because he undoubtedly was unknown to all of the party, and had simply come in a business way to pay his money for the gratification of his curiosity, or from whatever motive prompted him.

"Have you any friend in the other world with whom you would like to communicate more than with any other? Please write the name of him or her, along with the names of other deceased persons, separately on these little slips of paper, fold them up securely, so that I cannot see them, and then shake them about so that neither you nor I can tell which contains the name of the one you desire most to communicate with." This was done, and the concealment of the name among a half dozen others was complete. Then, as though speaking to some one near by, but who was not present to the sight, he said:

"I want you to give me the name of the person whom this gentleman desires most to speak with." He took up each little slip of paper and pressed it to his forehead, saying over, as he did so, rapidly the letters of the alphabet. When he came to one of the slips, three distinct but quiet raps were heard on the table, and the medium said, "Ah! that is the name," and running over the alphabet four times, till each time the letters "L. R. J. M." were indicated by raps, he handed the still-folded paper to the writer, and then himself wrote on a piece of paper the words, "The one you wish to hear from is here and will speak to you—John Moore." The stranger confirmed this as the one name out of the half-dozen he had written from whose owner he desired to hear.

"Now you can write a question which you desire to ask your friend, and he will answer it."

At this point the stranger seeing the reporter taking notes, said he did not desire the question or its answer made public. This was acceded to, and the question was written; folded up securely, and the same simple performance of naming over the letters of the alphabet, rapping out of letters, which the medium said signified words and ideas, and then writing out the answer, certainly without ever having seen the question, was proceeded with.

This answer was pronounced satisfactory, and the stranger said that its character showed the most intimate acquaintance with the secrets which were alone known to him and to the dead. Then taking up one of the still-folded slips of paper and pressing it to his forehead, the medium said: "There is a person who comes here, who gives me marvellous force. A sister comes in great beauty. She would speak to you in private." Then writing ten or a dozen words on a piece of paper, Mr. Foster handed it over with the slip of paper. The stranger in evident surprise, wonder, and entire belief, looked at the medium, and said: "That is the name of my sister—even her nick-name, and you have written that which you could not possibly know through human agency."

"Oh, but," the reporter hears some one say, "this stranger was a confederate; and was only repeating a

studied part." But this theory of collusion was exploded by the happenings in the reporter's own case.

More in jest than with any desire to test the power of this clever charlatan (as up to the present time our representative had undoubtedly regarded Mr. Foster), our reporter had written the name of his father, his grandmother, both dead many years, and of a lady friend whom he had known in his youth, and who had died four or five years ago, at her home in a little village in D—. She was, indeed, the village beauty, and as such had had plenty of lovers, but though engaged to one, she was believed by her most intimate friends to be in love with another, the hard-working, modest-spoken doctor of the village. He, from bashfulness, or want of means, or love, never declared himself, and as time passed on she sickened and died, without ever having told her love. Now this lady was so indifferent to the reporter that it required an effort to think of her, and her name was chosen because of the utter impossibility of guessing it, or anything of her history.

Suddenly leaving the stranger, Mr. Foster turned to our representative and said: "There is a very singular influence comes to me, such as I have felt with none of the others. It fills me. Look, the initials of the name will come out upon my hand written in letters of blood!"

With this he extended his hand over the table, and a shudder went through his whole frame. Then putting down his hand, he rubbed its white surface a moment or two, when distinctly, startlingly plain, there came out as though he had marked it with a knife without cutting the skin, the initial letters of the dead village beauty's name! "Now," said he, "write her a question." The pencil of the reporter traced hurriedly the words, "Did you love Doctor—or—the most?"

The answer of the deceased girl came from the medium, "Yes, more than you or any one ever knew."

"Aha! my dear sir, you are at fault there, for I asked a question which requires a name in the answer and not a simple statement. I have asked here which of two people she loved the most."

"Oh! She did not understand. I'll ask again." Then looking seriously at the reporter, Mr. Foster said solemnly, "It is a sacred subject, and she never meant to tell—but since you doubt her power to speak to you, she says that she loved Dr—(naming him), and never loved—" (naming him).

Now it was absolutely impossible for these names and these facts to be guessed at, or inquired about, or imagined, for they did not arise in the reporter's mind till the moment of writing them down and thinking of them.

Thus we have given but two instances on the very threshold of the *seance*, which hardly suggest the power of this extraordinary man. We say, "hardly suggest his power," for the secrets he probed, the tales he told, the hopes he raised and blasted, the fears he dispelled and created, seemed to affect those who were interested to a degree which was literally painful to behold. One of the party so thoroughly believed the truth of his ability to look into the hearts and minds of others and read their inmost thoughts, that he cried out in bitter anguish when told that which appeared to topple over a long-cherished hope, and he passed out of the room haggard and white with fear, or despair, or something which could not be sought into by the reporter, for it was, as Mr. Foster said, too sacred a subject.

The medium actually wrote a name which had but that moment passed through our representative's mind, and could not have been conceived of by another. While talking on indifferent subjects, Mr. Foster said abruptly: "There, your father is present, and will communicate with you; he announces himself as Vincent J—." "Well, now, as this was the name of one of the party's father, who had been dead over thirteen years, to say the least, this was wonderful.

While talking, three loud raps, as though from the heavy heel of a man, startled all, and the medium at once said: "That's Jim Fisk, he has come to you," referring to the financier. "Ask him what's gold?" Eighteen loud distinct raps were then gravely and slowly counted, and thus the sudden change

in the gold market from Saturday's 116 $\frac{1}{4}$ was indicated by the deceased broker, railroad, steamboat, and what-not man. Inquiring still further, "Jim" expressed it as his opinion that gold would have a very sudden decline.

But this *seance* is too long already, and must be brought to an abrupt close. The reporter does not undertake to explain, or even to comment, further on the doings and sayings in that little room in the upper stories of the Continental Hotel yesterday. He leaves the subject, where many have left it before him, as an existing enigma which he will not attempt to solve. This busy world, with its alternate bustle and worry, calmness and pleasure, strife and peacefulness, is enough to engage the thoughts and the powers of all that live in it, and whether it is well to tread so nearly on the borders of another world as those who go into Mr. Foster's presence do, is a serious question.

LETTERS OF TRAVEL BY J. M. PEEBLES.

WE extract the following from one of Mr. Peebles' Letters of Travel which appears in the "Banner of Light" of March 29th:—

SPIRITUALISM IN MELBOURNE.

No longer local, the spiritual philosophy, with attending phenomena, has already become cosmopolitan. Though there had been here and there a Spiritualist in the colonies for several years, importing occasionally pamphlets and books from London and Boston, Spiritualism took no organic form till less than three years since. The city society was organized under the name of the "Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists." This Association has sustained speaking regularly by Messrs. Nayler, Bright, Ross, Walker, and others. The Rev. Mr. Tyerman, a recent convert from the English Church, addressed the Society each Sunday for the term of six months. He is the present stated lecturer of this Association. Mr. W. H. Terry commenced investigating in 1861. He is a healing medium, bookseller, and earnest worker. He is also editor and proprietor of the Harbinger of Light. This journal succeeded the Glow-worm, published by Mr. Nayler. The committee that invited me hither, I find to be solid, substantial, and honorable gentlemen. Some of them occupy prominent positions in the city. Mr. Stanford, an American, is the brother of ex-Governor Stanford, of California, who, at present, is the President of the Central Pacific Railway. In a future letter, I shall give full descriptions of the more noted Spiritualists and mediums in the colonies, not forgetting the estimable Dr. Howitt, brother of William Howitt, England. A promising Children's Progressive Lyceum had been organized a few weeks before our arrival. Mr. Terry was elected Conductor, and Mr. G. A. Stow Secretary. The Lyceum is now well-officered and well-equipped. The flags and badges are beautiful. Dr. E. C. Dunn aided them in perfecting the work. He drills the children in calisthenics, and at present conducts the Lyceum exercises. It could not well be in better hands. Surely sectarians are greatly troubled about this "marching" and Sunday "profanation." Drunkenness and prostitution are quite endurable by Melbourne Pharisees; but a Progressive Lyceum borders upon blasphemy. Though a churchly eyesore, it is to be hoped the city be spared the fate of Tyre and Sidon.

THE MASONIC HALL RECEPTION.

Nearly two hundred ladies and gentlemen assembled in this hall on the evening of November 1st, to extend their hands of welcome. It was a pleasant gathering of noble souls; hearts warm, every face was wreathed in smiles. The hall tastefully decorated with flowers and evergreens, presented a gay and attractive aspect. The exercises were varied and interesting. The President, Mr. J. Ross, delivered the congratulatory address. Our off-hand response followed. Then came short, pithy speeches from Rev. Mr. Tyerman, Dr. Dunn, Mr. Bright, Mr. Walker, and others. The music, instrumental and vocal, was well executed; the refreshments richly inviting, and the conversation genial and jolly. It was upon the whole a most enjoyable evening throwing

around and over us that feeling of social life which exists in my native land. Our prayer was, may these acquaintances ripen into friends, and may our united friendships and efforts be mighty to the upholding of truth.

LECTURES AND PERSECUTION.

Heaven save sensitive reformers in all lands from the mockery of an unprincipled press, from priestly throats that vomit falsehood, and churhual tongues that delight to lap blood. "Let the cup pass." Though addressing audiences in all of the American States save two, upon the unpopular yet progressive movements of the age, I have never been so unjustly criticised, basely misrepresented, and shamefully villified as by a portion of the Victorian press. I have been burlesqued in the Weekly Punch, and pantomimed in the theatres. The abuse commenced with the delivery of the first lecture in Temperance Hall. This was expected by some of the Spiritualists. Accordingly, Mr. Charles Bright, a literary gentleman, was sufficiently far-seeing to secure a superb short-hand reporter. And while a slimy, policy-seeking press was pouring out "gall and wormwood," lo, the lecture of the "vulgar blasphemer" appeared in print, entitled "Spiritualism Defined and Defended," ably prefaced by Charles Bright, and published by W. H. Terry.

The following, understood to have been written by a red-faced individual connected with the Melbourne Daily Telegraph—organ of the clergy—and appearing in the Dunedin Morning Star, reveals the *animus* of a large portion of the religious and secular press, touching Spiritualism and its expositors:—

"If the 'Seer of the Ages' gets your length in earth-life, you had better treat him well, for I can assure you, you will seldom find his equal. If his spirit should get the length of 'Arabula' before his body reaches N.Z.—I don't know the latitude of this place, viz., 'Arabula,' but I refer you for information to the 'Arabian Nights'—you should get *his hide stuffed*, and preserve him to posterity: the 'Ages,' I fear, shall never more look on his like again. I cannot better begin to describe him than by giving a few of the delicate epithets bestowed on this Mr. Peebles in all the newspapers, town and country, noticed by himself the other night, when relieving his 'busting' heart: 'An impudent American,' an 'impious pretender,' a 'long-haired apostate,' a 'specious humbug,' a 'rabid lunatic,' an 'uncouth revivalist,' a 'vulgar blasphemer.' These figures of speech might be indefinitely multiplied, and yet half the truth would not be told. This 'great and good man' (Peebles) in speaking, works himself up to a frenzy; while with blood-shot eyes, and rolling tongue, and foaming mouth, he tells the opinion that some 'heathen Chinee' had formed of Christianity away somewhere in the far West. He then mauls over a Yankee story about some poor youth mourning for his granny, whom he had never seen, and who came from 'Arabula' to pat him on the head. * * On every occasion of his public appearance the same hysterical females, the same half-crazed, wild-looking men are to be seen ready to swallow anything and everything; the more absurd the better, and the louder they cry, 'The new and beautiful faith'; 'there is no God, but Peebles is a prophet.'"

In the strength of a high-toned Spiritualism giving assurance of attending angels, a man may richly afford to despise all insult, and all falsehood thrown upon him, all railing at his country, or at his spiritual convictions, from the unclean lips of priests, and the paid creatures of darkness who scribble for the press. These pimple-faced paragraphic penny-a-liners of the Melbourne press, with more syphilis in their blood than sense in their brains, have yet to understand that Victorian journalism lacks the energy of the American, the culture of the French, and the dignity of the English press. The celebrated William Howitt never wrote a pithier paragraph than this:—

"Many persons who have attended spiritual seances of various kinds, and satisfied themselves of their reality, express their surprise that the press, as a body, remain doggedly, *unconvinced*. Why should they be surprised? It is simply an affair of Hodge's razors. Journals, whether of news or literature, like those celebrated razors, are made to sell. So long as the press thinks it will *pay better* to abuse Spiritism than to profess it, it will continue to do so; but should the writers for the press hear to-day, or any day, that the public is gone over to Spiritism, they will all, to a man, be zealous Spiritists the next morning. Then, and not a day earlier, nor a day later, will the press be *convinced*. Their logic all lies in the three celebrated words: pounds, shillings, and pence."

THE JOURNALISTIC SOMERSET.

Immediately after the conclusion of our first course of six lectures in Temperance Hall, the committee resolved to take possession of a larger and more fashionable place for the second series. They luckily secured the Prince of Wales Theatre. The first Sunday there were over 2500 present. Some were turned away for want of standing room. Last Sunday evening the proprietor opened the upper gallery, and there were full 3000 in attendance. The chair was occupied by Mr. Ross. The platform was filled with gentlemen of standing and position in society, and the congregational singing excellent. The Melbourne press met with a sudden conversion! It is sunny and fair now as a summer's morning. The Daily Express mentioned the meeting very handsomely. The Daily Herald said, "An immense crowd of people assembled again last night to hear the American Spiritualist expound the new religion. He was evidently in earnest, and at times eloquent." The Daily Telegraph prefaced a very fine report by saying that a "crowd filled the Prince of Wales Theatre last evening from pit to ceiling. The assemblage was intelligent and orderly, listening to the lecture entitled 'Spiritualism becoming universal.'" The Daily Melbourne Age, previous to its abstract of the discourse, says, "The Theatre was so crowded that, even though the upper gallery was opened, many people were compelled to stand." The report appearing in the aristocratic Daily Argus is forwarded this mail. This transformation of the press from sneers to smiles entitles the conductors to not the least credit. The modification was forced upon them; the virus remains. The Ethiopian cannot readily change his skin, nor the leopard his spots. The press has three creed-words, "*Will it pay?*"

THE SEASON.

A December day this, approaching Christmas. The weather, though warm, is not oppressive. Rains are frequent. The haying season over, farmers are harvesting their wheat. Mining continues on a large scale, and new mines are occasionally discovered. Deeply are we indebted to Dr. Motherwell for several drives into the country; also to Mr. Carson, a florist and horticulturist, who recently took us through villas towards the mountains. The fields and farming-lands, hedged around with sweet-briar, were under fine cultivation, and the scenery magnificent. Mr. Carson has in his fruit orchard thirty varieties of oranges, several varieties of lemons, Japanese loquats, and nearly all the European fruits. Walking through the market this morning, I saw ripe raspberries, currants, gooseberries, blackberries, plums, apples, apricots, almonds, and pears. When these Australian colonies cut themselves entirely loose from English domination, constituting an independent federation, they will develop their hidden resources, and reveal the richness of their intellectual capacities. Invited to lecture upon Spiritualism in New Zealand, I sail for this South-Sea isle about the 10th of next month.

Melbourne, Aus., December 17th, 1872.

We observe that the city authorities at Boston, U.S.A. have (to the consternation of the clergy) thrown open the Public Library on Sundays, and that the privilege of visiting it has been largely availed of by the public. The local press support the action of the civic authorities, but the clergy protest against the innovation, as will be seen by the following extract from the *Boston Daily Globe* of February 17th:—"As will be seen by our local report, a few clergymen, not especially known to fame, met at the Meionson yesterday, to express their holy horror because the civic authorities have opened the Public Library on Sundays. These unhappy individuals forget that this is the nineteenth century: they should have lived in Essex county a hundred years ago." We trust that ere long our local authorities will follow the example of our American cousins, and feel sure the privilege would be largely appreciated by the Melbourne public.

We clip the following from the *Banner of Light*, in reference to A. J. and Mary Davis:—

HEADQUARTERS IN NEW YORK.

ESTABLISHED BY A. J. AND MARY F. DAVIS.

To Spiritualists and Liberalists generally—*Greeting:*
It is with sincere pleasure that we apprise you that we have, after mature deliberation, concluded to establish in the city of New York a dépôt for the sale of all standard works on Harmonial Philosophy, Spiritualism, Science, Medicine, and General reform, with special attention to books for the advancement of the Children's Progressive Lyceum. Our headquarters are pleasantly and conveniently located at No. 24 East Fourth Street—only a short distance from Broadway on the west and Bowery on the east—where we shall be most happy to welcome you and all other friends of progress, whenever you or they have occasion to visit the metropolis.

We have been for so many successive years away from public life, in the retirement of the home and the study, that we have lost sight of the name and post-office address of individuals, old friends and new, who take interest in the inspirations and spiritual ideas which are to-day stirring the great heart of the world. Therefore we beg leave to trespass upon your time and patience, and to ask of you the full name and address of persons within the circle of your acquaintance who would be likely to kindly receive from us our Catalogue of Publications, or some special Announcements which we may from time to time wish to send them.

Hoping to hear from you at as early a day as possible with a goodly list of names of persons friendly to our objects and principles, we subscribe ourselves cordially your friends,

A. J. AND M. F. DAVIS.

No. 24 East Fourth st., New York City.

SPIRITUALISTS' SOIREE.

THE soiree in connection with the half-yearly meeting of the Victorian Association of Progressive Spiritualists takes place at the Masonic Hall on Wednesday, July 9th. It is intended to be a social gathering of members and friends of the association, and, as such, we trust it will be well attended by all who sympathise with the movement. It is understood that after the conversazione a quadrille party will be improvised, in which all who desire will be invited to participate. A committee of ladies have charge of the catering, which we have no doubt will be well done.

THE LATE PROFESSOR DE MORGAN,

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR.—In the article on "Spiritualism at Melbourne," in the current number of the *Spiritual Magazine*, a Mr. David Blair is reported to have said, "That Professor De Morgan had stated that the evidences in favor of Spiritualism were miserably insufficient."

Although Mr. Blair's mis-statements are sufficiently disproved by the writer of the article, I am unwilling to allow the misrepresentation of Mr. De Morgan's words and meaning to go uncorrected. The only place in which the words "miserably insufficient" occur in his writings, in reference to Spiritualism, is in the preface to *From Matter to Spirit*. His words are:—"The physical explanations which I have seen are easy, but miserably insufficient; the spiritual hypothesis is sufficient, but ponderously difficult. Time and thought will decide, the second asking the first for more results of trial"—Preface, p. 6.

All Spiritualists—even those who have studied the subject most and longest—find the spirit hypothesis "ponderously difficult," though its sufficiency, when understood, may be relied on. Time and thought are deciding rapidly in its favour, as the results of experiment increase in number. Mr. De Morgan's words are not falsified.

SOPHIA DE MORGAN.

RECLAIMED.

(Continued.)

Hoping that my dear George would meet me on my arrival, with some plan for the future proper placing of our offspring, where he would be taken care of, and our sin and shame remain a secret in our own breasts; hoping this, had sustained me up to the present. But when night approached, and no communication from him, and when the next day and another night arrived, and I still alone in my hiding-place, my worst fears began to be confirmed, and in my anguish and terror I wondered what steps would be best for me to take.

I dare not go home to my dear good and loving father, with the evidence of my guilt and degradation in my arms. It would break his dear heart, and would drive deeper down in that already stricken heart a consciousness of our great loss, the death of my much loved mother. This my error and sin he would attribute to the want of a mother's watchfulness and care. How could I then open again the wounds in that already too much wounded heart? No, I could not; rather was it possible for me to flee away anywhere than go where I was most loved; do anything than the only thing that could be best for me. My darling babe was the only object to condemn me. If he was out of the way I might return to my home and my father's love, and my secret might live in my own conscience. I am forsaken, unknown in this house; nothing is easier than to pay my bill, send my luggage elsewhere, walk across the road, the water there is deep, and the mud at the bottom will become a grave for my child, and there will the evidence of my sin be lost to the sight of man for ever.

These were the mad and hellish thoughts which haunted my miserable heart. Insane with terror, grief, and disappointment, I endeavoured to carry them out; all was done except the act of murder. There I stood, alone on the wharf, close to the side of the river, the night was dark, damp, and miserable, and seemed in every way to favor my dark deed. I unwrapped my darling, and kissed his dear face for the last time, and hardening my heart against every natural instinct I was in the act of dropping my child into the river, knowing that no human eye was upon me, when I distinctly heard the words, "Martha, thou shalt not kill," and I thought I could identify my mother's voice.

In a moment I rolled my babe in my shawl, and fled with terror from the spot, the words still ringing in my ears, "Thou shalt not kill." In a condition bordering on madness I fled from street to street, not knowing what I did nor whither I went. In my delirium I must have cast my child under the verandah of some house, and hurried away fast as my feet would carry me. I have since learned that my boy was found by the occupant of the house at the door of which I left him, and given into the hands of the police, and I was discovered in a township some distance from Melbourne in a wretched condition, and hopelessly insane. They took me to the Lunatic Asylum, where in a day or two I died.

(To be Continued).

A meeting of the Society for the Investigation of Spiritualism, and of persons desirous of forming a new Society, was held last evening, at the Athenaeum Hall. The President, Mr. T. Redmayne, was in the chair. A report was read from the Committee, recommending that an Association be organised on a more positive basis than that of the present Society, while the latter should be continued. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried, that the Society for investigation be continued. New office-bearers were elected, and after a vote of thanks to the late President, Mr. T. Redmayne, for the able and very generous manner in which he discharged his duties as head of the Society, through the last year, the meeting was dissolved. A fresh meeting was then organised, and the propriety of establishing a new Society was discussed. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously carried, that a society be established, to be called the First Society of Progressive Spiritualists, Dunedin. An interim Committee was elected, and the meeting adjourned.

Otago Times.

MEDIUMSHIP.

ILLUSTRATION FROM MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

If two strings are stretched with unequal tension—one having the points of tension fixed, while those of the other are movable,—the latter will not respond in unison with the former. But every vibration of the first will tend to move the points of tension of the latter, and will, after a time, bring them into such position that the two strings will be in unison. The time required to produce this result will depend on the violence of the vibrations, and the facility with which the points of support yield. This may result by a single vibration, or it may require days, months, or years.

"When a tuning-fork receives a blow, and is made to rest on a pianoforte during its vibrations, every string, which, either by its natural length or by its spontaneous subdivisions, is capable of executing corresponding vibrations, responds in a sympathetic note." The strings not thus in harmony remain silent, "Some one or other of the notes of an organ are generally in unison with the panes or the whole sash of a window, which consequently resound when those notes are sounded." The same effect may be often observed in thunder; the sound rolling away, growing gradually lower, until a note is touched which makes the windows and the whole house jar. The long-continued vibrations of neighboring bodies, when not in unison, affect each other, every vibration striving to reduce the other to concord. Adjacent organ pipes, not in unison, will often after a time force each other into harmony; and "two clocks whose beats differed considerably, when separate, have been known to beat together when fixed to the same wall, and one clock had forced the pendulum of another into motion, when merely standing on the same stone pavement." These illustrations may not appear at first pertinent; but, on mature reflection, they will be acknowledged as the rough exponents, in the physical world, of the science, adaptations, and harmonic relations of the spiritual.—*Hudson Tuttle.*

Advertisements.

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A SOIREE

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